

ELEGY OF A NIGHTINGALE.

FOR Elusino lost,—renew the strain,
Pour the sad note upon the ev'ning gale;
And as the length'ning shades usurp the plain,
The silent moon shall listen to the tale.

Sore was the time—ill-fated was the hour,
The thickest shook with many an omen dire!
When from the topmost twig of yonder bow'r
I saw my husband—tremble and expire.

'Twas when the peasant fought his twilight rest,
Beneath the brow of yonder breezy hill;
'Twas when the plummy nation fought the nest,
And all, but such as lov'd the night, were still;

That—as I sat with all a lover's pride,
(As was my custom when the sun withdrew)
Dear Elusino sudden left my side,
And the curs'd form of man appear'd in view.

For sport, the tube he level'd at our head,
And curious to behold more near my race,
Low in the copse the artful robber laid,
Explor'd our haunt, and thunder'd at the place.

Ingrateful wretch—he was our shepherd's son—
The harmless, good old tenant of yon cot!—
That shepherd wou'd not such a deed have done!
'Twas love to him that fix'd us to this spot.

Off' as at eve his homeward steps he bent,
When the laborious task of day was o'er,
Our mellowed warbling sooth'd him as he went,
'Till the charm'd hind—forgot that he was poor.

Ah! could not this thy gratitude inspire?
Could not our gentle visitations please?
Could not the blameless lessons of thy fire
Restrain thy barb'rous hand, from crimes like these?

Oh! cruel boy—thou tyrant of the plain,
Couldst thou but see the sorrows thou hast made,

Or didst thou know the virtues thou hast slain,
And view the gloomy horrors of the shade;

Couldst thou behold my infant younglings lay
In the moss cradle which our bills prepar'd,
Babes as they were—the offspring of the day—
Their wings defenceless, & their bosoms bar'd:

Surely, the mighty malice of thy kind,
Thy pow'r to wrong, and readiness to kill;
In common pity, to the parent's mind,
Would cease the new-made father's blood to spill.

Haply---the time may come, when heav'n may give
To thee, the troubles thou hast heap'd on me.
Haply---ere well thy babes begin to live,
Death shall present the dart of misery.

Just as the tender hope begins to rise,
As the fond mother hugs her darling boy;
As the big rapture trembles in the eyes,
And the breast throbs with all a parent's joy;

Then may some midnight robber,---skill'd in guile
Resolv'd on plunder, and on deeds of death;
The fairy prospects---tender transports spoil,
And to the knife---reign thy children's breath.

In that sad moment, shall thy savage heart
Feel the keen anguish, desperate, and wild,
Conscience forlorn, shall doubly point the smart;
And justice whisper---this is child for child.

'Rest of their fire---my babes, alas! must sigh;
For grief obstructs the widow's anxious care;
This wasted form---this ever weeping eye,
And the deep note of destitute despair;

All load this bosom with a freight so sore,
Scarce can I cater for the daily food;
Where'er I search---my husband search'd before---
And soon---my nest will hold---an orphan brood!